Amateur Radio Newsline™ Report 1403 – July 2, 2004

Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1403 with a release date of
Friday, July 2, 2004 to follow in 5-4-3-2-1.

The following is a Q-S-T.

The score is now Ham Radio one, BPL zero; OSCAR Echo is alive, and business is
good for CW.

Find out the details on Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1403 coming your
way right now.

(Billboard Cart Here)

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BPL: SCORE ONE FOR THE GOOD GUYS

A major broadband-over-power line pilot test by Alliant Energy in Cedar Rapids,
Iowa is shut
down after local hams document the harmful interference and the Federal
Communications
Commission gets a formal complaint from the A-R-R-L. We get the details from
Amateur Radio
Newsline's Mark Abramowicz NT3V:

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It took nearly three months to accomplish the mission, but amateurs in Cedar
Rapids - armed
with ample data and the muscle of the American Radio Relay League - convinced
Alliant to
prematurely halt their B-P-L test.

Jim Spencer, W0SR, first discovered the interference on his HF radio right
after Alliant
launched its B-P-L testing March 30.

Spencer, who quickly mobilized other Cedar Rapids hams to form a technical
committee,
says the interference was so severe that it wiped out his and others' ability
to use
their radios.

Spencer says the group worked with Alliant officials to try to resolve the
interference
and conducted several test measurements with the utility's cooperation.

Spencer tells Amateur Radio Newsline the group appealed to Alliant to shut down
the
system and stop the interference on several occasions. But it was clear the
B-P-L
industry was telling Alliant's managers something else.

"There's a lot of regulatory uncertainty here," Spencer explains. "And that what the hams were calling harmful interference - in my case S-9 signals, you know, every 1-plus kilohertz across the band, they were being told that wasn't really harmful.''

Spencer says communications between his technical group and Alliant officials were civil, but they accomplished little action. He says he and others filed complaints with the FCC.

"I think in 21 communications I received one simple response basically told me to go back to the power company - the operator of the system," Spencer says. "And, of course, I had done that all the time. So, we had been asking the utility company to close it down, we had been asking the FCC to help us and then the ARRL went and escalated that."

Wade Walstrom, W0EJ, is the ARRL's Midwest Division Director. He says the league's FCC complaint finally got the utility's attention.

"The thrust of the complaint was that they were now aware that the system was causing interference and didn't shut the system off so now that makes it willful interference," Walstrom said...

Alliant stopped the B-P-L pilot test on June 25 saying it had gathered the necessary data to make a determination on whether a general rollout of B-P-L would be worth pursuing, according to Spencer. He says Alliant's project leader told him the ARRL's FCC complaint was just one factor in the company's decision.

"Obviously we're happy, but we didn't feel like we had won," Spencer said. "We felt like this was a technical problem and that we tried to communicate some of the technical parameters to them and that they'd made a good business decision."

Spencer says an Alliant representative told him the company has no plans to pursue B-P-L at this time.

"In order to distribute it out to a sparsely-populated rural area with all the equipment it would take, it's not clear that this thing makes economic sense," Spencer says. "And that this really can meet the goals of the rural user which is one of the things that people touted."

The ARRL's Walstrom is cautiously optimistic Alliant's decision might have a ripple

effect.

"We would hope that other utilities or other organizations that were looking to

possibly use B-P-L as a source of revenue will look and see the decision that Alliant
has made and re-think their own plans and hopefully decide that maybe there are other
ways to provide broadband internet connections to the population as a whole," Walstrom says.

Walstrom says the Cedar Rapids group led by Spencer has set a precedent.

"All the proof on how well it's going to work isn't there yet," Walstrom says.

"And the proof that we have established here in Cedar Rapids and is coming out from other parts of the country is that it's not an interference-free system by

any means and in fact it causes a lot of interference and we've documented that here."

Spencer says his committee, consisting of a group of engineers - most of them retired from Rockwell Collins - stuck strictly to technical evidence in communications
with Alliant. But he says its clear B-P-L has taken on a very political tone.

"Obviously the problem has got a lot of political implications, but the thing that
hams can do is remain professional and keep it primarily on a technical level," Spencer says.

The ARRL's Walstrom says if he could stand before the FCC panel to make his case,
he would strongly urge the commissioners to postpone action on or even walk away from B-P-L.

"I think they need to delay it until they're satisfied that they're able to mitigate any
interference problems at all and by mitigate from an amateur radio standpoint that really
means eliminate," Walstrom says.

Spencer adds, there are no hard feelings toward Alliant. Spencer says he and members of
his technical group still have a good, working relationship with the utility.

"We've had quite a bit of communication back and forth through this whole thing," Spencer
says. "I mean I've had many, many e-mails and some phone calls and I would say that it
was pretty positive and still is."

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Mark Abramowicz, NT3V, in Philadelphia.

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In addition to operations in Cedar Rapids, Alliant also provides utility services to customers in sections of Minnesota and Wisconsin, and a small strip of northwestern Illinois

(W0SR, ARRL)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: ECHO IS UP AND RUNNING

The newest Amateur Radio satellite is now in orbit and doing fine. Chuck Green, N0ADI, reported by phone from the Baikonur Cosmodrome that the launch of AMSAT Echo and the other satellites occurred on time on June 29th at 0630 UTC. He watched the rocket climb out and said it appeared to be flying straight and true. A second phone call from Chuck 18 minutes later confirmed that the launch carrying AMSAT OSCAR Echo was successful and that all spacecraft had separated successfully.

Chuck was assisted in the final integration and checkout process at Baikonur by the team from SpaceQuest which included Dr. Dino Lorenzini KC4YMG, Mark Kanawati N4TPY, and Lyle Johnson KK7P. The SpaceQuest team members are also AMSAT members and volunteers.

First contact with Echo was at 1452 UTC on June 29th. After collecting a bit of TLM the 435.150 MHz transmitter was turned off at 1500 UTC. The preliminary keps were observed to be pretty close. The first look at Echo’s telemetry shows things are looking good. The battery was fully charged and the panels were delivering about 950 ma, which is fine. The panels were supporting the transmitter power adequately at about 2.3W output. The bird appeared to be tumbling as expected. Internal temperatures are around 10 degrees Celsius which is also as expected.

On the second pass the loading of software began and good progress was made.

Telemetry continues to look very good. While fades clearly indicated Echo continues to tumble (as expected), at 2.2 Watts output good bits were received without difficulty. Rather than turn the transmitter off at the end of that pass, based on a very good looking power system, the power was turned down to about 0.3 Watts.

The hour between passes was spent closely examining the captured telemetry and comparing

it to pre-launch testing, as well as tweaking the keps a bit.

During the second set of passes approximately twelve hours later, the command team
finished loading the housekeeping software. The housekeeping task is up and running
as of June 30th at 0525 UTC. With more data available on the power systems performance
the transmitter has now been left at about 1.2W.

The morning passes on June 30th concentrated on gathering telemetry. The evening passes
continued with checkout activities.

A telemetry decode program, TLMEcho, is available for those who would like to view and
report data from Echo. It may be downloaded from AMSAT.ORG in the Echo project area,
http://www.amsat.org/amsat-new/echo/

If you record telemetry please send the CSV files to ke4azn@amsat.org.

Please do not transmit to Echo until checkout and commissioning has been completed and
the satellite is made available for general use. Unexpected uplinks may cause delays
in verifying the proper operation of ECHO and delay the opening of the transponders to
general use.

(AMSAT, WD0E)

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Break 1

>From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline, heard on bulletin
stations around the world including the N7SKO repeater serving Arizona,
California and Nevada.

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WITH NEWSLINE: SEND US YOUR ID - PLEASE

Would you like to ID your own repeater or bulletin station here on Amateur Radio
Newsline? Well here is how you can do it. Record the following sentence and include
the call sign and location you want to honor.

>From the United States of America, we are the Amateur Radio Newsline, heard on bulletin
stations around the world including the xxx repeater serving yyy zzz. The xxx is the

call sign. The yyy and zzz are the city and state.

Then, take the tape and mail it to Amateur Radio Newsline, Editorial Office, 28197
Robin Avenue, Santa Clarita, California, 91350. As time permits, we will select an
audio I-D and include it in the newscast.

All tapes submitted become the property of the Amateur Radio Newsline and cannot be
returned. Again, the address to make yourself a part of this bulletin service is
Amateur Radio Newsline, Editorial Office, 28197 Robin Avenue, Santa Clarita, California, 91350.

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RESCUE RADIO: VA HOSPITALS SAY YES TO HAM RADIO

Hospitals in Roanoke, Virginia, will soon be ham radio equipped. Mike Knight, K4IJ,
reports through the Repeater Journal that a budget of twenty-five thousand dollars has
been approved for the installation of Amateur stations at between ten and twelve primary
healthcare facilities in the Roanoke area.

Knight says that the system will include a dual band base radio, a mobile radio, a power
supply, antennas and full lightning protection at each hospital. Also going on-line will
be a pair of commercial grade FM voice repeaters with back-up generators, and a dedicated
digital repeater. The voice systems will have IRLP and Echolink tie-ins to communicate
outside the local area.

When completed, the Roanoke system will consist of five to six linked repeaters. The
base stations will be connected to each hospitals emergency power system to keep them on the air.

(Repeater Journal)

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RADIO LAW: COURT SAYS NO TO EXPANDED MEDIA OWNERSHIP

A U.S. Court of Appeals in Philadelphia has thrown out most of the Federal Communications
Commission's new and controversial media ownership deregulation. Its Thursday, June 24th
decision means that for the time being, ownership levels of broadcast properties and
related media will remain at current levels.

Back on June 2nd of 2003, the FCC's Republican majority voted to dramatically ease a
prohibition barring daily newspapers from buying broadcast stations in their markets.
The agency lifted caps limiting how many radio and TV stations a broadcaster could own
in the same area.

But in its 2 to 1 decision the Philadelphia court said that while some relaxation of the
ownership limits might be reasonable, the agency had failed to adequately justify the
limits it had put in place. The court announced that its original stay on the FCC's media
ownership deregulation would continue until the agency fixes the regulations to the court's
liking.

(TV Week)

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ENFORCEMENT: TOO MUCH MORSE CODE

The FCC is asking a Missouri ham why he is running a Morse code training program smack in
the middle of the 40 meter band. The target of the inquiry is Paul D. Westcott, KC0OAB of
Purdy who apparently has code practice on the air around the clock.

Its June 21st letter to Westcott notes that the agency had previously discussed this matter
with KC0OAB and was given assurances that the transmissions he was making were for Morse
Code practice. Since that time the agency has received another complaint which alleges
that the purported 40 meter code practice transmissions are 24 hours a day, seven days per
week. The FCC says that due to the crowded nature of the 40 Meter Band, it is extremely
inconsiderate to take up spectrum in that area for transmissions 24 hours a day. This,
even if it is purportedly for “code practice” purposes.

The agency has posed several questions to Westcott to explain his operation and was given
20 days from the date of the FCC letter to provide a very detailed response.

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ENFORCEMENT: NO LICENSE - DON’T OPERATE

The town of Reseda, California, is only about 10 miles from the Newsline studio. It’s
also the place where the FCC alleges that someone has been operating a ham radio transmitter

without the benefit of being a licensed ham.

In a letter to a resident identified as Joseph A. Mosbergen, the FCC says that he or someone in his residence has been operating radio-transmitting equipment on several Los Angeles area Two Meter Amateur Radio repeaters. The agency warns Mosbergen that this is a violation of it rules and will subject him or whoever is proven to be operating to punitive action. This could include a fine or imprisonment, as well as seizure of any non-certified radio transmitting equipment. It also tells Mosbergern that this is the last warning that he will receive.

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HAM RADIO BUSINESS: HEIL TO MARKET CLEAR SPEECH SPEAKER

Turning to the ham radio business scene, word that the NCT Group has appointed Heil Sound Limited as its prime worldwide manufacturer and distributor of the Clear Speech Speaker system. Under the terms of the deal, Heil Sound will distribute Clear Speech speakers to their present amateur radio dealers and commercial broadcast distributors. Also, the Clear Speech speaker will be improved and several new products will be brought to the market using the NCT Group technologies. According to Heil Sound these new product models are in development and will be available for market by the end of July. More is on line at www.heilsound.com

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COMMUNICATIOS NEWS: DUAL-CORE PROCESSORS ON THE WAY

Tech News reports that Advanced Micro Devices plans to begin selling microchips with the equivalent of two microprocessors in one next year. The Sunnyvale, California based company said it plans to offer dual-core processors for data-serving business computers in the middle of next year, and for high-end home computers in the second half of next year.

Dual-core technology combines the power of two processors in one package. This permits the creation of a more powerful computer and increased computation power when multitasking.

Last month, Intel said it would bring dual-core chips to the marketplace in 2005. That’s

more than a year ahead of schedule.

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HAM RADIO BUSINESS: CW IS GOING STRONG

If you think Morse code is on its way out, the ham radio business community probably
disagrees with you. At least that's the impression one gets thumbing through the articles
in the July issue of CQ Magazine.

Not only are the ads for Morse related products holding steady, but the new products area
has some reviews of the latest CW related products. And not to be outdone, Dave Ingram,
K4TWJ, devotes his World of Ideas column to Morse Keys from around the world.

If you are a Morse lover, this is the CQ edition for you. It's on your newsstand now.
More information is on the web at www.cq-amateur-radio.com.

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THE SOCIAL SCENE: COME TO THE TENNESSEE HAM BREAKFAST

On the ham radio social scene, the Middle Tennessee Ham Breakfast takes place at the
famed Tennessean Truckstop on the second Saturday of every month. People begin to
gather there at about 9 a.m. and it's billed as a chance to meet the middle Tennessee
hams you may have contacted on the air.

Interested in attending? For full information simply send a note to kenbreed@surfmore.net
or call Ken, AI4DV at area code 931 – 424 – 9523 during normal business hours.

(Do Not Read: Repeater Journal)

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THE SOCIAL SCENE: ROANOKE VA. IN JULY

And still in the South, mark down July 31st to attend the annual Roanoke Hamfest.
This event is sponsored by the Roanoke Valley Amateur Radio Club and will be held at
William Byrd High School in Vinton, Virginia starting at 8 a.m. local time. Full
information on this friendly event is on line at w4ca.host4www.com

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BREAK 2

This is ham radio news for today’s radio amateur. From the United States of America,
We are the Amateur Radio Newsline with links to the world from our only official
website at www.arnewsline.org and being relayed by the volunteer services of the
following radio amateur:

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COLOR TV IS CELEBRATING ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY THIS YEAR

Now for a bit of a history lesson. Although color TV transmissions were in the

development stages many years earlier, the broadcast industry is celebrating its
half century mark this year. This is because it was 50 years ago that color broadcasts
were initially
made available to the public.

Now, National Public Radio has posted a story and some interesting historical resources
at its website. It is very interesting reading. That URL is in this week’s printed
Amateur Radio Newsline report.

(www.npr.org/features/feature.php?wfId=1789944 (CGC))

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EMERGING TECHNOLOGY: NEW DVD PLAYER FILTERS OUT BAD WORDS

Wal-Mart is selling the world's first DVD player that can seamlessly skip over violence,
swearing, nudity and other potentially offensive movie content. The $79 unit features
technology by ClearPlay and is manufactured by Thomson Inc. under its RCA brand.

The DVD player is the latest development in a legal battle between the Salt Lake City-based
software company and Hollywood. Members of the Directors Guild of America filed suit
against ClearPlay in September 2002, when the filtering product was available as a
computer program claiming it impinges on intellectual and creative rights. Those legal
proceedings are still under way in Colorado's 10th District Court. Both sides currently
are waiting for a ruling on a summary judgment filed by ClearPlay.

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WORLDBEAT - SLOVAKIA: FIRST CELLPHONE VIRUS ANNOUNCED

On the international scene word that a group of underground virus writers have announced
what is believed to be the world's first worm that can spread on advanced mobile phones.
According to news reports, the worm named Cabir, was sent to security software firms in
the United States and Russia by a member of 29a.

29a is described as a group of virus writers from the Czech Republic and Slovakia who
pride themselves in creating proof of concept malicious viruses. Thankfully, Cabir has
been found to have no damaging code attached that might destroy files or execute other
harmful operations.

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WORLDBEAT – UK: RSGB QSL BUREAU CHANGE

On a more positive note, word that Marc Litchman, G0TOC is the new RSGB QSL Bureau
Sub-Manager for the G7AAA through G7ZZZ series of callsigns. Litchman can be reached at
26 Oak Tree Close, Loughton, Essex IG10 2RE, in the U-K.

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WORLDBEAT – NEW ZEALAND: ZL1AN HONORED FOR EDUCATIONAL WORK

And a word of congratulations to New Zealand’s Dr. Gary Bold, ZL1AN. Bold is a physics
lecturer at the University of Auckland and he has been awarded the Prime Ministers
Supreme Prize based in part on his 43 years of dedication to teaching.

Bold has taught every course in the physics department, all courses in geophysics signal
processing and network theory. He has also devised and revised experiments and designed
the curriculum for many second and third year physics courses. A dedicated C-W enthusiast,
in his spare time he writes the NZART Break-In Magazine column "The Morseman."

The presentation was made at the recent 2004 Tertiary Teaching Excellence Awards.
ZL1AN was one of 12 academics from nine institutions presented with awards, each of which
brings with it a $30,000 prize.

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DX

In D-X, word that several O-H prefix operators will be operational from Aland Island as
OH0I during the CQ Magazine and RTTY Journal RTTY DX Contest. This, from September 25th
to the 26th. They will operate as a Multi class 2 entry using multiple beams and vertical arrays on the low bands. QSL via OH3BHL.

And keep an ear open in September for RA3AMG from Cyprus. He will also be active in the
same contest signing P3B. QSL via his home callsign.

Lastly, ST2DX will be active from the Sudan until the 10th of July. Look for him mainly
on SSB, with some CW, on all bands between 30 and 6 meters. QSL this one as directed on the air.

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THAT FINAL ITEM – HAMMIN’ OLDIES ON WBCQ

And finally this week… who says hams and short wave listeners are nothing but a bunch of
stuffy old geezers?

The Peacock Project is a group of Internet broadcasters that have banded together to
present a variety of music eras, styles and talk over WBCQ on Saturday nights at 8PM
Eastern time, which is Midnight Universal Time, Sunday. Named in tribute to one of their
group, Rob Peacock, who suddenly passed away in January, the show features a different
host each week with a program that is unique to his own musical preference and personal
presentation.

The first weekend of every month will feature Dave Kirby's look back at Old Time
Radio and some non-English language versions of American songs. The second weekend is
The Voice of Savage Henry, a 1960's and 70's "Garage Band" rock show hosted by Steve Evanchuck,
KG8KO. Tim Gaynor is heard directly from Australia on the 3rd week and the 4th week is S
teve Coletti, aka “Big Steve Cole”. Four times a year there is a 5th Saturday to the month
and on those weekends it is time for "Hollow-State Hound", a show scheduled to feature
big band music with Mike "The DX Hound".

The broadcasters got together in an odd way, and going on WBCQ's 7415 kHz frequency
is like going home to where it all started. A few years ago there was a group of ham radio

operators who were also listeners to shortwave broadcasters and utility stations. Under the
umbrella organization of the Association Of North American Radio Clubs, (ANARC), they would
join into a ham traffic net every Sunday morning on 7240 kHz to compare their station
loggings. While the net still has a lot of good memories for those who joined in or only
listened in, the group eventually disbanded. The net then moved to an Internet Relay
Chat channel that was already in existence.

To a few die hard members like Dave Kirby, N1DK, the discontinuance of the radio
net was only a minor setback. Dave began doing weekly reports by way of the Cyber
Shortwave real audio file that was available for download by anyone. It was at the suggestion
of member Pete Costello that Dave began doing his presentations as a live interactive program
by way of sending sound via live365.com and receiving typed comments back from listeners via
the IRC chat channel.

As loggings and SWL news tapered off, Dave began doing more music and off topic bantering.
This led the powers that be at the chat room to ask Dave to create his own chat room for the show.
The kick in the butt turned out to be a blessing as now the door was opened for others who wanted
to do interactive radio using Dave's chat room

We hope that you will enjoy the diversity of programming that these enterprising hams and
SWLs have created. The Peacock Project begins July 3rd on WBCQ at 7415 kHz and your fellow
broadcasters, hams and SWLs at the Amateur Radio Newsline wish you the best.

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NEWSCAST CLOSE

With thanks to Alan Labs, AMSAT, the ARRL, the CGC Communicator, CQ Magazine, the FCC, the
Ohio Penn DX Bulletin, Radio Netherlands, Rain, the RSGB and Australia's Q-News, that's all
from the Amateur Radio Newsline(tm). Our e-mail address is newsline @arnewsline.org.
More information is available at Amateur Radio Newsline's(tm) only official website located at
www.arnewsline.org. You can also write to us or support us at Amateur Radio Newsline(tm),
P.O. Box 660937, Arcadia, California 91066.

Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, is away on vacation this week, so with Mark Abramowicz,

N-T-3-V, as
my partner this week, I’m Don Wilbanks, AE5DW, saying 73 and we thank you for listening."
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